

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 068732

73

ORIGIN EA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USLO PEKING NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI NIACT

AMCONSUL HONG KONG NIACT

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 068732

E.O. 11652: DECLASSIFIED WHEN USED

TAGS: SCUL, CH

SUBJECT: INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF US TOUR BY PRC  
PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE

1. THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE IS SELF-EXPLANATORY. THE  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON US-CHINA RELATIONS WILL MAKE THE  
FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT TUESDAY AFTERNOON MARCH 26, AND  
DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WILL DRAW ON THIS GUIDANCE TO RESPOND  
TO PRESS QUERIES. POSTS SHOULD NOT COMMENT IF QUERIED  
BY THE PRESS.

2. BEGIN PRESS GUIDANCE

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE  
TOUR OF THE US BY THE PRC PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE?

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 068732

A. A PRC PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE WAS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE MARCH 29 AND BEGIN ITS TOUR OF THE US IN EARLY APRIL UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR US-CHINA RELATIONS. THIS VISIT WAS ONE OF THE EXCHANGES COVERED IN OFFICIAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE US AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WE RECENTLY LEARNED THAT THE

REPERTOIRE INCLUDED A SONG WITH HIGH POLITICAL CONTENT WHICH WE CONSIDERED TO BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR A CULTURAL PRESENTATION UNDER SUCH SPONSORSHIP. WE THEREFORE ASKED THAT THIS ITEM BE DROPPED FROM THE REPERTOIRE, MAKING CLEAR THAT THIS IN NO WAY REFLECTED ANY CHANGE IN OUR SUPPORT FOR THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND FOR THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA INFORMED US THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO ACCEDE TO THIS REQUEST, AND WE RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDED THAT THE TOUR BY THE PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE COULD NOT TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED.

Q. WHAT WAS THE SONG?

A. THE SONG ENTITLED "PEOPLE OF TAIWAN, OUR OWN BROTHERS," INCLUDED THE PHRASE, "WE ARE DETERMINED TO LIBERATE TAIWAN."

Q. WHO DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM WITH THE CHINESE--THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR US-CHINA RELATIONS OR THE STATE DEPARTMENT?

A. WE WERE OF COURSE IN TOUCH WITH THE COMMITTEE, AND THE COMMITTEE HAD SOME BRIEF CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRC LIAISON OFFICE ON THIS SUBJECT. HOWEVER, SINCE THE MATTER WAS POLITICAL, THE MAIN DISCUSSIONS WERE BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND THE PRC LIAISON OFFICE.

Q. WHEN DID THE PROBLEM ARISE?

A. THE CHINESE AT FIRST GAVE THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE A TENTATIVE PROGRAM WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE THIS SONG. ON MARCH 8, THE PRC LIAISON OFFICE GAVE THE NATIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 068732

COMMITTEE A PROGRAM VERY SIMILAR TO THE EARLIER ONE, BUT WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY LIST WHICH INCLUDED THIS SONG. THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE MENTIONED IT TO THE PRC LIAISON OFFICE ON MARCH 11, AND THE DEPARTMENT FIRST DISCUSSED IT WITH THE PRC LIAISON OFFICE ON MARCH 13.

Q. WHY DID THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER THE SONG INAPPROPRIATE?

A. AS I SAID, THE SONG HAD HIGH POLITICAL CONTENT, AND WE THOUGHT IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR A CULTURAL PRESENTATION. WE HAVE AUTHORITATIVE CHANNELS FOR DEALING WITH POLITICAL ISSUES, AND WE BELIEVE CULTURAL EXCHANGES

SHOULD BE KEPT FREE FROM POLITICAL CONTROVERSY. AS YOU KNOW, IN A PREVIOUS INSTANCE WE RESISTED THE INTRODUCTION OF POLITICAL MATTER INTO THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM. (IF ASKED, MENTION THE PRESS PREVIEW FOR THE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBIT.)

Q. IS THERE SOME SORT OF AGREEMENT THAT THE RECEIVING COUNTRY CAN "CENSOR" THE ACTIVITIES OF AN EXCHANGE GROUP?

A. NO. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THE CONTENTS OF THESE EXCHANGES SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. THIS IS WHY THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA AGREED TO LAST-MINUTE REQUESTS FROM THE CHINESE FOR PROGRAM CHANGES WHEN IT WAS IN PEKING IN SEPTEMBER 1973.

Q. WHAT REASON DID THE CHINESE GIVE FOR NOT ACCEDING TO THE REQUEST?

A. I DON'T WANT TO SPEAK FOR THEM.

Q. WAS SECRETARY KISSINGER CONSULTED ABOUT THIS PROBLEM?

A. YES.

Q. HOW WILL THIS AFFECT THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM?  
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PAGE 04 STATE 068732

A. WE HOPE IT WILL NOT AFFECT OTHER EXCHANGES, AND SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD.

Q. ISN'T THIS A MAJOR SETBACK IN US-PRC RELATIONS?

A. WE CONSIDER IT AN EPISODE WHICH NEED NOT AFFECT AN IMPROVING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRC, WHICH IS IN THE BASIC INTEREST OF BOTH COUNTRIES. OUR INTENTION TO PROMOTE THE FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY AND AUTHORITATIVELY STATED, AND THAT REMAINS OUR INTENTION.

Q. DOESN'T THIS INDICATE THAT THE PRC FEELS STRONGLY ABOUT THE TAIWAN QUESTION, AND EXPECTS THE US TO MOVE

TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM?

A. THE PRC HAS IN THE PAST CONVEYED ITS VIEWS TO US ON THE TAIWAN QUESTION, AS ON OTHER MATTERS, THROUGH OFFICIAL CHANNELS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO RELY ON THAT CHANNEL.

Q. WHAT IS THE US POSITION ON THE TAIWAN QUESTION?

A. OUR POSITION IS THAT STATED IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE .

Q. HOW WAS THIS EXCHANGE TO BE FUNDED?

A. THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON US-CHINA RELATIONS OBTAINS FUNDS FOR ITS EXCHANGES WITH THE PRC FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES, INCLUDING A GRANT FROM THE BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

Q. WON'T THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE LOSE MONEY ON THIS?

A. I ASSUME IT WILL INCUR SOME COSTS--I DON'T HAVE ANY DETAILS.

Q. HOW LONG WAS THE PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE SCHEDULED TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 068732

BE IN THE US, AND WHERE WOULD IT HAVE PERFORMED?

A. IT WAS SCHEDULED TO BE IN THE US ABOUT A MONTH, AND TO PERFORM IN LOS ANGELES, ST. PAUL/MINNEAPOLIS, CHICAGO, NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON.

Q. HOW MANY EXCHANGES ARE SCHEDULED FOR THIS YEAR?

A. THERE IS A TOTAL OF ABOUT 20 FACILITATED EXCHANGES, BOTH WAYS--THAT IS, EXCHANGES DISCUSSED THROUGH OFFICIAL CHANNELS. MANY OTHER GROUPS GO TO THE PRC AFTER MAKING THEIR OWN ARRANGEMENTS.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US A LIST OF THE FACILITATED EXCHANGES.

A. SOME OF THE DETAILS ARE STILL BEING WORKED OUT. AS YOU KNOW, THE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBIT IS HERE NOW; AS THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE AND AAU ANNOUNCED RECENTLY, AN AMERICAN TRACK AND FIELD TEAM IS SCHEDULED TO GO IN MAY; A SOLID STATE PHYSICS DELEGATION FROM THE PRC IS IN THE US NOW; AN AMERICAN DELEGATION TO STUDY SCHISTOSOMIASIS WILL GO TO THE PRC IN APRIL; AND AT THE

MORE OFFICIAL LEVEL, SPEAKER ALBERT AND MINORITY LEADER  
RHODES LEAVE MARCH 26 FOR A VISIT TO THE PRC.

3. PRESS SPOKESMAN WILL STRESS FOLLOWING POINTS:

OUR REQUEST THAT THIS ITEM BE DROPPED FROM THE

REPERTOIRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE DOES NOT  
REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN OUR ADHERENCE TO THE POLICIES  
CONTAINED IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE.

WE CONSIDER THIS AN EPISODE WHICH NEED NOT AND SHOULD  
NOT AFFECT IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE PRC, WHICH ARE  
IN THE BASIC INTEREST OF BOTH THE US AND THE PRC.

OUR SOLE CONCERN WAS TO AVOID THE KIND OF CONTROVERSY  
WHICH WE BELIEVE THE INCLUSION OF THIS SONG WOULD HAVE  
CREATED. WE HAVE AUTHORITATIVE CHANNELS WITH THE  
CHINESE FOR DEALING WITH POLITICAL ISSUES, AND WE BELIEVE  
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PAGE 06 STATE 068732

CULTURAL EXCHANGES SHOULD BE KEPT FREE FROM THOSE ISSUES.  
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